

**AMBER THIESSEN, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
CURRICULUM VITAE**

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston
M243C Melcher Life Sciences
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EDUCATION

- 2010-2013 Ph.D., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Major: Speech-Language Pathology
Emphasis Areas: Augmentative and Alternative Communication &
Neurological Disorders
Dissertation Title: Visual Attention Patterns for Contextually Rich Images:
Neurotypical Adults in Two Age Groups and Adults with Aphasia
- 2005-2007 M.S., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Major: Speech-Language Pathology
- 2000-2005 B.A., University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Minor: Psychology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2020-Present **Associate Professor**
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston, Houston, TX
- 2013-2020 **Assistant Professor**
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston, Houston, TX
- 2013-2013 **Visiting Assistant Professor**
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston, Houston, TX
- 2010-2013 **Barkley Scholar Graduate Research Trainee**
Augmentative and Alternative Communication Lab
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Director: Dr. David Beukelman

CERTIFICATION, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, AND TRAINING

- 2007-Present American Speech Language Association (ASHA)
- 2011-Present International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- 2010-Present ASHA Division 12-Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- 2010-Present ASHA Division 2-Neurophysiology and Neurogenic Speech and
Language Disorders
- 2013-Present Texas Speech-Language Pathology License
- 2013-Present Texas Speech-Language and Hearing Association

2016 National Institute of Health Regional Seminar, Baltimore, MD.
2016-Present National Joint Committee Member
2007-2012 Nebraska Speech-Language Pathology License

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Grants and Awards

2021 Learning in a Second Dialect: An Eye-Tracking Study, National Institutes of Health (NIH), R21 Award (Co-I, unfunded, \$426,250)
2021 Learning in a Second Dialect: An Eye-Tracking Study, Spencer Foundation (Co-I, Under review, \$50,000)
2019 Personalized Images as Communication Supports, Grants to Enhance and Advance Research (GEAR), University of Houston (Funded, \$37,000)
2019 The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (The RERC on AAC) National Institute Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) (Co-I, Unfunded \$925,000)
2017 Theme Identification of Two Forms of Message Representation: An Eye Tracking Investigation, CLASS Research Progress Grant, University of Houston (Funded \$3,000)
2017 Personalized Images as Communication Supports, National Institute of Deafness and other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) Early Career Research Award (Unfunded \$300,000)
2015 Visual Attention of Adults with Traumatic Brain Injury Minnesota Spinal Cord Injury and Traumatic Brain Injury Research Grant Program (Unfunded \$115,087)
2014 Supporting student learning through hands-on access to augmentative and alternative communication technology, Teaching Innovation Program, University of Houston (Funded, \$23,475)
2013 The selection of visual scenes: A comparison of visual attention across three types of scenes, New Faculty Research Grant, University of Houston (Funded \$5,950)

Peer Reviewed Publications

Thistle, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2021). Effectiveness and utility of visual scene displays as communication supports for adults and children with complex communication needs: Perspectives of clinicians and researchers. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 30*(3), 1181-1193.

Thiessen, A., Thistle, J., & Brown, J. (2021). Clinical and research perspectives on visual scene displays. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 30*(3), 1134-1156.

Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.**, Freeland, T., & Brewer C. H. (2019). Visual processing patterns of adults with TBI when viewing image-based grids and visual scenes. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 35*(3), 229-239.

Thiessen, A., Brown, J., Freeland, T., & Brewer, C.H. (2019). Identification and Expression of Themes Depicted in Visual Scene and Grid Displays by Adults with Traumatic Brain Injury. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 28*(2), 664-675.

Light, J., Wilkinson, K., **Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Fager, S. (2019). Designing

effective AAC displays for individuals with developmental and acquired disabilities: State of the science and future research directions. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*.

- Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D.** (2019). Learning Styles and Motivations of Individuals Without Prior Exposure to Augmentative and Alternative Communication. *Topics in Language Disorders, 39*(1).
- Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2018). Using images to support individuals with aphasia: Current research and clinical trends. *American Journal of Speech Language Pathology, 27*, 504-515.
- Thiessen, A.,** Brown, J., Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2017). The effect of human engagement depicted in contextualized photographs on the visual attention patterns of adults with traumatic brain injury. *Journal of Communication Disorders, 69*:58-71.
- Thiessen, A.,** Brown, J., Beukelman, D., Hux, K., Myers, A. (2017). Effect of message type on the visual attention of adults with traumatic brain injury. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 26*(2), 428-442.
- Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., & Hux, K., & Longenecker, M. (2016). A comparison of the visual attention patterns of people with aphasia and adults without neurological conditions for camera-engaged and task-engaged visual scenes. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 59*(2), 290-301
- Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2015). Noun representation in grid displays: Visual attention patterns of people with traumatic brain injury. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 31*(1), 15-26.
- Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., Ullman, C., & Longenecker, M. (2014). Measurement of the visual attention patterns of people with aphasia: A preliminary investigation of two types of human engagement in photographic images. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 30*(2), 120-129
- Dietz, A., **Thiessen, A.,** Griffith, J., Peterson, A., Sawyer, E., & McKelvey, M. (2013). The renegotiation of social roles in chronic aphasia: Finding a voice through AAC. *Aphasiology, 27*(3), 309-325.

Other Publications

- Thiessen, A., & Beukelman, D.** (2013). Training communication partners of adults who rely on AAC: Co-construction of meaning. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 22*(1), 16-20.
- Beukelman, D., Schunk, A., **Thiessen, A.,** Fager, S., & Ullman, C. (2012). Vocabulary associated with medical procedures. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 22*, 119-123.
- Quinn, E., Beukelman, D., & **Thiessen, A.** (2011). Remote instruction of potential AAC support personnel. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 20*, 97-101.
- Thiessen, A.,** Horn, C., Beukelman, D., & Wallace, S. E. (2011). Learning motivation of adults involved in AAC intervention. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 20*, 69-74.

Invited Publications

- Thiessen, A., & Brown, J.,** (2021). Personalization of restorative and compensatory treatments

for people with aphasia: A review of the evidence. *Topics in Language Disorders*.
Accepted

Beukelman, D. R., **Thiessen, A.**, & Koch Fager, S., (2021). Personalization of Visual Scene Displays: Preliminary Investigations of Adults with Aphasia, Typical Females across the Age-Span, and Young Adult Males and Females. *Topics in Language Disorders*.
Accepted.

Thiessen, A. (2020). Compensatory and restorative application of AAC in chronic, severe aphasia. In R.C. Branski & S. M. Molfenter (Eds.), *Speech-Language Pathology Casebook*. Stuttgart, New York: Thieme.

Thiessen, A. (2019). Preliminary evidence in support of the use of aided modeling to promote question and declarative sentence production in children with complex communication needs. *Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention*, 10(3-4), 148-154.

Complete List of Published Work in MyBibliography:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncbi/1ZU3maaP9jm58/bibliography/53419590/public/?sort=date&direction=ascending>

Peer Reviewed Research Presentations

Thiessen, A., & Brown, J., (2020). *Examining the Verbal Descriptions of Adults with Aphasia to Two Types of AAC Displays*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, accepted, not presented due to COVID-19.

Ackley, K., Brown, J., & **Thiessen, A.** (2020). *Semantic Organization for Adult AAC Users: Speech-Language Pathologists' Agreement and Consistency Within a Grid Layout* American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, accepted, not presented due to COVID-19.

Ackley, K., Brown, J., & **Thiessen, A.** (2020). *Vocabulary Selection for Adult AAC Users: Speech-Language Pathologists' Agreement and Consistency of Vocabulary Relevance*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, accepted, not presented due to COVID-19.

Thiessen, A., & Thistle, J. (2020, January). *SLP Perspectives on Visual Scene Display Design for Adults*. Assistive Technology Industry Association, Orlando, FL.

Thistle, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2020, January). *SLPs' Perspectives on Design of Visual Scene Displays for Children*, Assistive Technology Industry Association, Orlando, FL.

Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2019, November). *Effect of Visuographic Alterations on Attention to Daily Planners by Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.

Boyd, C., Anderson, P., Brown, J., & **Thiessen, A.** (Accepted 2019, November). *Linguistic Impact of Grid & Scene AAC Displays for Adults with Acquired Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.

Thiessen, A., Thistle, J., & Brown, J. (Accepted 2019, November). *SLP Perspectives of the Utility and Challenges of Using Visual Scene Displays for Adult Clients*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.

Thistle, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (Accepted 2019, November). *SLPs' Perspectives of the Utility & Challenges of Using Visual Scene Displays with Children*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.

Thiessen, A. & Brown, J. (2018, November). *Effectiveness of Grid and Scene Supports for*

- Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury*, American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Boston, MA.
- Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.**, Murphy, M., & Keszycki, R. (2017, November). *Creating & Implementing Effective Daily Planner Supports for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A.** & Brown, J. (2017, November). *Preferences & Visual Attention Patterns for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Displays in Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A.** & Brown, J. (2017, March). *The Effect of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Display Type on the Theme Identification Abilities of Adults with TBI*. International Brain Injury Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Thiessen, A.**, Schmadeke, S., Sims, F., Justice, R., & Maher, L. (2017, February). *Examining Outcomes from a Community-Based Wellness Center for Adults with Chronic Aphasia*. Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Austin, TX.
- Thiessen, A.**, Justice, R., Schmadeke, S., & Maher, L. (November 2016). *Outcomes from a community-based wellness center for aphasia*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Thiessen, A.**, Brown, J., Freeland, T., & Hux, K. (2016, November). *AAC display theme identification by adults with TBI: Does image type matter?* American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Brown, J. **Thiessen, A.**, Hux, K. & Salley, J. (2016, November). *Analysis of attention, Processing & visual scanning in adults with traumatic brain injury*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Brown, J. **Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2014, November). *Message representation in AAC grid displays: Visual fixation patterns of people with traumatic brain injury*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Annual Convention, Orlando, FL.
- Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Boersen. (2013, November). *Image Preferences of People with Traumatic Brain Injury: A Comparison of Two Message Types*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.
- Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., Longenecker, M., & Ullman, C. (2013, November). *The Effect of Engagement on the Visual Attention Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.
- Thiessen, A.** & Beukelman, D. (2012, November). *Visual Attention Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Online Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Thiessen, A.** & Beukelman, D. (2012, June). *Visual Fixation Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Beukelman, D. & **Thiessen, A.** (2012, April). *Training communication partners of adults who rely on AAC*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Online Conference.
- Thiessen, A.** & Beukelman, D. R. (2011, November). *Learning styles of potential AAC facilitators*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, San Diego, CA.
- Horn, C., **Thiessen, A.**, & Beukelman, D. (2011, January). *Adult learning and AAC*.

American Speech Language and Hearing Association Annual Conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Orlando, FL.

Dietz, A., Sawyer, E., Peterson, A., McKelvey, M., and **Thiessen, A.** (2009, May). *Moderate-severe, chronic aphasia: An exploration of the changes in social roles.* Clinical Aphasiology Conference, Keystone, CO.

Other Peer Reviewed Presentations

Domsch, C. Richels, C., Green, L., Louw, B., **Thiessen, A.**, & Beverly, B. (2020). *Putting the E in EBP: Moving Data from Patients to Publications.* American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, accepted, not presented due to COVID-19.

Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2017, November). *Eye-Tracking Technology: Methods for Evaluating Cognition Following TBI.* American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.

Wilkinson, K., O'Neill, T., **Thiessen, A.**, Light, J., Weiss, A., Liang, J., Fehr, C., & Spencer, J. (2017, November). *Optimizing AAC Display Design for Individuals With Developmental or Acquired Disabilities: Contributions of Eye tracking Research.* American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.

Thiessen, A. & Brown, J. (2017, November). *Current Research & Clinical Trends in Image Use for Adults with Aphasia.* American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.

Thiessen, A. & Brown, J. (2016, May). *Communication supports for people with aphasia: An examination of current practices and research trends.* Clinical Aphasiology Conference, Charlottesville, VA.

Thiessen, A. & Brown, J. (2014, November). *The visual system after brain injury: Using eye-tracking technology for applied clinical research.* American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Orlando, FL.

Thiessen, A. (2014, February). *Selecting Optimal Visual Scenes for People with Aphasia.* Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Houston, TX.

Maher, L., **Thiessen, A.** Schmadeke, S., & Justice, R. (2014, February). *A Comprehensive Wellness Approach to Managing Chronic Aphasia.* Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Houston, TX.

Invited Research Presentations

Light, J., Wilkinson, K., **Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Fager, S. (2018, July). Designing effective AAC interface displays for individuals with complex communication needs: State of the science and future research directions. Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Augmentative and Alternative Communication State of the Science Conference, Arlington, VA.

Other Presentations

Freer, J., & **Thiessen, A.**, (2020, June). *AAC and Telehealth: Supporting Individuals with Aphasia,* Aphasia Access Conference, Online.

Thiessen, A. (2018, October). Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), MCO Medical Director's Quarterly Meeting. Austin, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2016, September). Visual scene displays: Existing research and upcoming projects, Texas Institute of Rehabilitation and Research, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2015, May). Selecting optimal visual scenes for people with aphasia. Hot Topics Conference, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2015, April). The role of eye tracking in the design of aided AAC displays. Rice University, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D. (2012, November). *Visual Fixation Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Research Fair, Lincoln, NE.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Coursework

University of Houston

Fall 2015 & 2016	COMD 2376 Anatomy and Physiology
Spring 2015	COMD 6326 Motor Speech Disorders
Fall 2013-2020	COMD 6328 Acquired Cognitive Disorders
Spring 2014-2020	COMD 7381 Augmentative and Alternative Communication
Summer 2013	COMD 7281 Communication Partner Training Clinical Boot Camp

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Fall 2012	SLPA 397A, Observation Class
Fall 2010 & 2011	SLPA 886, Augmentative and Alternative Communication Lab
Fall 2010	Co-Instructor, SLPA 886, Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Student Mentoring

Master's Students

Ashley Ramsey, Committee member, Master's Thesis, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Summer 2018)

Casey Richardson, Committee member, Master's Thesis, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Spring 2016)

Chung Hwa Brewer, Independent Research Advisor, Independent Project, University of Houston (Spring 2016)

Caitlin Calder, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2017-2019)

Caitlyn Pratt, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2018-2019)

Meredith Daly, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2018-2019)

David Horn, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2019-2020)

Undergraduate Students

Farrah Rahim, Independent Research Advisor, Biomedical Engineering, University of Houston (Spring/Fall 2017)

Marisa Martinez, Independent Research Advisor, Communication Sciences and Disorders,
University of Houston (Summer/Fall 2018)

Emily Starling, Independent Research Advisor, Communication Sciences and Disorders,
University of Houston (Fall 2018)

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

National Service

January 2021-Present	Editorial Consultant Board, Communication Disorders Quarterly
January 2020-present	Editor, ASHA Perspectives SIG 12
January 2017-2020	Editorial Board, American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology
September 2017-2019	United States Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) Disaster Relief Committee
March-April 2014	Member of the 2014 ASHA Program Committee for AAC
March-April 2012	Member of the 2012 ASHA Program Committee for AAC

Scholarly Journal/Manuscript Reviews

Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Since 2013
Aphasiology	Since 2015
American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology	Since 2016
Journal of Communication Disorders	Since 2020
Communication Disorders Quarterly	Since 2020
Journal of the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine	Since 2020
Patient Education and Counseling	Since 2020
Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology	Since 2021

Department Service

2021-	Merit Review Committee
2021	Post-Baccalaureate Admissions Committee, University of Houston
2019-	Evidence-Based Practice Report (EBPR) Coordinator, COMD, University of Houston
2018-	Academic Advisor, COMD, University of Houston
2016-	Member, COMD Scholarship Committee, University of Houston
2016-	Member, COMD Research Committee, University of Houston
2014-	Member, COMD Admissions Committee, University of Houston
2013-	AAC Team Meeting, University of Houston
2013-	Neurological Disorders Team Meeting, University of Houston

College Service

2019-	Faculty Governance and Advising Committee
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Other Service

2018-	Houston Aphasia Recovery Center (HARC) Program Committee
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